

Message Text

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PAGE 01 BUENOS 07016 181954Z

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ACTION ARA-20

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINT, AR

SUBJ: UNIVERSITY INTERVENED

1. SUMMARY: THE GOA NAMED ALBERTO OTTALAGANO, AN OBSCURE ORTHODOX PERONIST, AS INTERVENTOR OF THE UNIVERSITY OF BUENOS AIRES ON SEP 17. THE UNIVERSTIY REMAINS CALM AS STUDENT GROUPS HAVE NOT YET REACTED OTHER THAN ISSUING A COMMUNIQUE PROTESTING THE MANNER IN WHICH THE APPOINTMENT WAS MADE. END SUMMARY.

2. THE GOA MADE ITS LONG AWAITED MOVE AGAINST THE UNIVERSITY OF BUENOS AIRES ON SEP 17 WHEN IT APPOINTED ALBERTO OTTALAGANO, AN OBSCURE OLD-GUARD PERONIST, AS INTERVENTOR. HIS FIRST OFFICIAL ACT WAS TO SUSPEND CLASSES UNTIL SEP 24.

3. OTTALAGANAO IS 48 YEARS OLD, A LONG-TIME PERONIST FROM SANTA FE PROVINCE, AND A LAWYER. HIS LAST JOB WITH THE GOVERNMENT WAS AS ADVISOR IN THE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENTIAL PRESS SECRETARY. HE LEFT THIS JOB 2 DAYS AFTER VILLONE REPLACED ABRAS AS PRESS SECRETARY LAST MONTH. IDENTIFICATION WITH ABRAS SUGGESTS HE PROBABLY A HARD-LINER.

4. STUDENT AND FACULTY ACTIVISTS HAVE NOT YET REACTED OTHER THAN THE ISSUING OF A COMMUNIQUE BY THE STUDENT COORDINATING

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PAGE 02 BUENOS 07016 181954Z

GROUP (FULNBA) PROTESTING THAT THE APPOINTMENT WAS MADE WITHOUT

CONSULTING THE UNIVERSITY COMMUNITY. UNIVERSITY BUILDINGS REMAIN QUIET AND LARGELY DESERTED. THE NAMING OF OTTALAGANO WILL APPARENTLY HAVE THE SUPPORT OF A LEAST 4 OF THE 10 DEANS HOWEVER. MANUEL REY MILIARE OF DENTITSTRY, OSCAR SBARRA MITRE OF ECONOMICS, JORGE ROULET OF ENGINEERING AND RICARDO SAIEGH OF MEDICINE HAVE ALL RECENTLY BEEN TRYING TO MOVE TOWARD THE CENTER AND PUT SOME DISTANCE BETWEEN THEIR POSITION AND THAT OF LAGUZZI AND THE PRO-MONTONERO PERONIST YOUTH.

5. COMMENT: THE APPOINTMENT WILL UNDOUBTEDLY BE OPPOSED BY A PORTION OF THE UNIVERSITY COMMUNITY, ESPECIALLY IF HE IS A HARD-LINER AS HIS ASSOCIATION WITH ABRAS SUGGESTS. THOSE WHO WILL OPPOSE HIM MOST STRONGLY, THE LEFTIST PERONIST YOUTH, (JUP) WHO UNTIL YESTERDAY CONTROLLED THE UNIVERSITY, HAVE BEEN LOSING STRENGTH HOWEVER. THEIR PRO-MONTONERO STAND, THE RESIGNATION OF LAW DEAN KESTELBOIM AND THIER ATTEMPT TO HOLD A PLEBISCITE ON SEP 19 AND 20 ALL COST THEM SUPPORT. THE PLEBISCITE WOULD HAVE IN EFFECT MEANT VOTING FOR THE POSITION OF EDUCATION MINISTER IVANISSEVICH OR THAT OF INTERIM RECTOR LAGUZZI. WITH THE EXCEPTION OF THE JUP, THE OTHER STUDENT GROUPS REJECT BOTH POSITIONS AND WERE OPPOSED TO HOLDING THE VOTE. WHILE OTHER GROUPS BESIDES THE JUP WILL PROTEST THE NAMING OF OTTALAGANO, THEY MAY BE SOMEWHAT RELIEVED TO SEE THE PROBLEM MOVING TOWARDS A RESOLUTION AND WITHOUT HAVING THE UNIVERSITY CLOSED FOR A LONGER PERIOD. ANY MOVES ON THE PART OF OTTALAGANO TO MOVE TOO QUICKLY AWAY FROM THE MORE POPULAR POLICIES OF HIS PREDECESSORS WILL GENERATE A GOOD DEAL OF OPPOSITION.
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